

REMARKS

This paper is being presented in response to the final official action dated July 9, 2008, wherein claims 1-8 are pending, claims 1-3, 5, and 8 have been rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by Kepplinger, et al. US 5,584,910, and claims 4, 6, and 7 have been allowed in substance, but objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the objection and rejection are respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks.

This paper is accompanied by a request for continued examination filed pursuant to 37 CFR § 1.114, and an information disclosure statement filed pursuant to 37 CFR §§ 1.56, 1.97(b)(4), and 1.98.

The applicants' undersigned attorney acknowledges, with appreciation, the courteous telephone interview the examiner granted on September 9, 2008. During that telephone interview, the examiner helpfully clarified portions of the outstanding action. Specifically, the examiner indicated that the Patent Office was interpreting the claim 1 term "branched exhaust gas" as merely a gas that leaves a source (i.e., branched from a source). According to the examiner, the Patent Office was not interpreting the term as a gas that leaves a source and can be passed in at least two different directions (one direction being a direction into the fluidized bed). The examiner helpfully suggested to the applicants' undersigned attorney to amend the second phrase in claim 1 to recite that a "portion" of the branched exhaust gas is used to dry the iron ores or additives in the fluidized bed:

drying the iron ores or the additives by using a portion of a branched exhaust gas which is exhausted from at least one fluidized bed while conveying the mixtures to the fluidized bed by using the portion of the branched exhaust gas which is directed to the fluidized bed.

According to the examiner, claim 1 amended as shown above finds sufficient written description support in the application's Figure 1 and the specification's description of that figure. Moreover, according to the examiner, claim 1 amended as shown above is sufficiently distinguished over the applied prior art—specifically, the Kepplinger patent does not disclose such a branched exhaust gas.

In view of the foregoing, the applicants have amended claim 1 based on the examiner's helpful suggestion and indications. That amendment does not introduce new matter into the application or into the claims, and does not necessitate a new search for prior art. The applicants therefore respectfully request entry of the amendment to claim 1, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding objection and rejection, consideration of

the information disclosure statement filed concurrently herewith, and allowance of all pending claims 1-8.

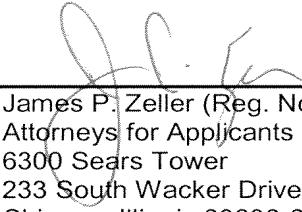
Should the examiner wish to discuss the foregoing, or any matter of form or procedure in an effort to advance this application to allowance, the examiner is urged to contact the undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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